

History's Greatest Hits

BY NICOLETTA RICHARDSON ART BY JULIEN CANAVEZES

Leonardo da Vinci

Painter, inventor, and all-around supergenius, Leonardo da Vinci rocked Renaissance Italy with his art and ideas. Find out about the life of this legend.

I SHOULD FRY THIS LATER FOR A SNACK.

START HERE

1452

Leonardo da Vinci is born in Vinci, Italy. (Get it? Da Vinci? From Vinci?) As a child, outdoorsy Leo loves hanging out in nature.

MY HAIR IS LIKE A GIANT BIRD'S NEST.

1460s

Teenaged Leonardo moves to Florence, Italy, where he takes painting lessons. Using a technique called tempera, the artist mixes color pigments with water and egg yolk to make paint.

1480s

The genius starts scribbling down some 20,000 pages of ideas. (Can you say writer's cramp?) He spells words backward and reverses each letter so his notes only look normal when reflected in a mirror. "Mirror writing" might have helped protect his ideas from snoops.

REFLECTED SIGNATURE

REAL SIGNATURE

1490s

Leonardo sketches designs of a flying machine. His blueprints make him the first known person to seriously study ways for humans to take flight.

1495

Asked by the Duke of Milan to paint a mural for a dining room, Leonardo creates "The Last Supper." People love the piece and Leonardo rockets to superstardom.

1503

Leonardo starts work on the "Mona Lisa," a painting famous for its eyes that seem to follow viewers wherever they move. Creepy!



1516

METHINKS HIS MAJESTY NEEDS MORE BLING.

Asked to be the King of France's official painter, Leonardo goes to, um, France, where he stays for the rest of his life.

LEONARDO, OVER HERE!

ARTIST OF THE EON

WANT MORE?

Check out the National Geographic Kids book *Leonardo da Vinci*.

